

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: June 25, 2007

CALLED TO ORDER: 5:30 p.m.

ADJOURNED: 6:23 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Attending Members

Dane Mahern, Chairman
Rozelle Boyd
Ron Gibson
Scott Keller
Jackie Nytes
Mike Speedy

Absent Members

Lance Langsford
Angela Mansfield
Marilyn Pfisterer

AGENDA

Presentation on the Division of Planning Accomplishments – Mike Peoni, Administrator

Presentation on the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission Accomplishments –
David Baker, Administrator

METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Metropolitan Development Committee of the City-County Council met on Monday, June 25, 2007. Chair Dane Mahern called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present: Rozelle Boyd, Ron Gibson, Scott Keller, Jackie Nytes, and Mike Speedy. Absent were Lance Langsford, Angela Mansfield, and Marilyn Pfisterer.

Presentation on the Division of Planning Accomplishments – Mike Peoni, Administrator

Mr. Peoni gave a presentation on the purpose of the Division of Planning and their accomplishments. (Exhibit A, attached).

Councillor Gibson asked for an update on the bus shelter amendment. Tamara Tracy, Principal Planner, Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD), said through the code adjustment effort they found that they needed to examine the process on how they bring amendments and proposals to the Council and the public. She said she has been working with IndyGo on the bus shelter assignment amendment and everyone is fine with the amendment process. The next step is taking the assignments to the public and the Council. The goal is to streamline the amendments to avoid the obstacles previously encountered.

Councillor Nytes asked if the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report is done for Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Mr. Peoni said this report is primarily for HUD.

Councillor Gibson asked for an update on Regional Transportation. Michael Dearing, Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Manager, said there have been a few delays in hiring an Executive Director for Regional Transportation and they are in the process of hiring. He said several presentations have been made to the state legislature about the needs of funding a variety of transit transportation. At this time, there is no stable source of funding, and the MPO has committed two years of planning funds for the salary of the Executive Director. Councillor Gibson asked if the surrounding counties are becoming more receptive to Regional Transportation. Mr. Dearing said they are for the most part and they have a full board representing all the counties.

Councillor Keller asked how many neighborhood plans are up to date. Robert Wilch, Principal Planner Manager, said they worked with comprehensive planners to analyze all existing neighborhood plans and get them up to date. He said the Comprehensive Plan will have the updated neighborhood plans. Councillor Keller asked how many plans are in effect. Mr. Wilch said approximately 25 or 30 plans. Councillor Keller asked if there will be neighborhoods that have no land use plan. Mr. Wilch replied in the negative and said all neighborhoods have a land use plan; either a Comprehensive Plan or a specific neighborhood plan.

Councillor Speedy asked if there is criteria for an area to qualify for a special plan. Mr. Wilch said they have done special plans upon request, for which the neighborhood can define their own boundaries.

Councillor Boyd asked if too much emphasis is being put on Comprehensive Planning. Mr. Peoni said one of the reasons citizens feel so strongly about the Comprehensive Plan is because they encourage the involvement of the citizens. Those who participate take on ownership of the plan. He said there are times when it is appropriate to deviate from the plan. Councillor Boyd asked what the city is doing in terms of vision. Mr. Peoni said vision is occurring with the Great Indy Neighborhood Initiative (GINI). He said with the City of Indianapolis, there are so many complicated issues that often times, they have to be very reactive.

Presentation on the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC)
Accomplishments – David Baker, Administrator

Mr. Baker gave a presentation on the background of the IHPC and their accomplishments. (Exhibit B, attached).

Chair Mahern asked for clarification on the four conservation districts. Mr. Baker indicated that the four districts are Ransom Place, Fayette Street, Cumberland, and New Augusta. Chair Mahern asked what the requirements are for a neighborhood to be in a historic or conservation district. Mr. Baker said the conservation district entails a unique strategy for a specific area and is not intended to be the first step. He said they believe that not all areas are appropriate for a conservation district.

Councillor Gibson asked if the Herron School of Art Reuse is the new location for the charter school. Mr. Baker replied in the affirmative. Councillor Gibson asked how the construction process is going with the school. Mr. Baker said it is coming along well.

Councillor Boyd asked if IHPC feels limited on things they would like to see done or if they have any recommendations. Mr. Baker said the commission works under the state statute, and for the most part, the state statute is better with giving authority to the commission than other states' statutes. He said the enforcement area is a challenge for IHPC. Councillor Boyd asked for an explanation on the use of synthetic materials. Mr. Baker said the commission has become challenged on what approach they are going to take with synthetic materials. He said with the public sector (neighborhoods), they are reasonable with the use of synthetic materials; however, it is important to uphold the original materials if they are still available. Some synthetic materials are used for molding and details on buildings.

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Councillor Keller asked how many homes the IHPC has to protect. Mr. Baker answered approximately 6,000. Councillor Keller said he encourages the Council to look into additional staff for IHPC because of the amount of work IHPC does. IHPC has meant a lot to the tax base, tourism, art fairs, etc.

Councillor Nytes asked if any discussion is being made on the impact of the historic district designation and ongoing process on appraised and assess values of the properties within the districts. Mr. Baker said years ago a study was done on property values in the districts. The result was that property values were either maintained or, in most cases, increased. He noted that this study had nothing to do with assessments, and he is not aware of any current studies. Councillor Nytes noted that the property owners in the historic districts pay for any reviews within the districts.

With no further business pending, and upon motion duly made, the Metropolitan Development Committee of the City-County Council was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dane Mahern, Chair
Metropolitan Development Committee

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